

Remarks

Claims 1-14 are pending. Claims 7 and 10-12 are amended. Claim 7 was amended to remove the extraneous language of “the method” in line 2 and claims 10-12 were amended for proper antecedent basis purposes. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added.

Based on the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the outstanding rejections and passage of the claims to allowance.

§ 102 Rejections

Claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Walance et al. (US 5,832,058). Applicant respectfully traverses for the following reasons.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Walance reference does not anticipate the claims. In particular, Walance does not disclose the claimed bus and primary branch structure, with “at least one switch which in a first state connects the primary branch with the bus and in a second, normal state, when the primary branch is not in use, connects the primary branch with ground.”

Applicant acknowledges that Walance mentions a “bus” in his description of the prior art, where a test bus 12 (Fig. 1) is identified and connects the Central Office to the “no test trunk 11.” However, this description does not disclose the claimed bus, primary branch and switch structure. Walance also mentions an un-shown bus at col. 5, lines 37-39, which describes a bus connecting processor 53 (Fig. 6) to components of the adapter. Again, there is no description of the bus connected to a primary branch via a switch in one state and the primary branch being connected to ground when not in use.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that Walance’s Fig. 7 and its associated description (see e.g., col. 6, lines 42-64) does not disclose the claimed structure. In contrast, Walance’s Fig. 7 shows lines 81 and 83 connected via a relay 71 to DATU TIP and DATU RING. Even if, for the sake of argument, leads 81 and 83 might be considered as a “primary branch”, there is no disclosure of a second primary branch, (claim 1 recites “at least two primary branches”) – note that lead 81 and lead 82 cannot be separate primary branches, as they both are

part of the same telecommunications line. See Walance's Fig. 4, where a line labeled "A/B" is drawn to one single subscriber telephone apparatus.

Regarding claim 7, applicant respectfully submits that Walance does not disclose the claimed step of "connecting only that primary branch through which access to a telecommunication line is to be established with the bus while the others of the at least two primary branches remain connected to ground." As stated above, Applicant respectfully submits that Walance at least does not disclose a second primary branch.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons above, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 1-14 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Walance et al. has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is requested. Please contact the undersigned should there be any questions or in order to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

September 1, 2009
Date

By: _____ /Gregg H. Rosenblatt/
Gregg H. Rosenblatt, Reg. No.: 45,056
Telephone No.: (512) 984-7443

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
Facsimile No.: 651-736-3833